

CHAPTER 11

AUDIO AND AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

Departments or agencies which impart information to the public through audiovisual means must ensure that materials are accessible to individuals with disabilities. These may include videos, public service announcements for either television or radio, or the production or hosting of television or radio shows.

11.1 Videotapes


Videotapes developed for educational or promotional purposes by a department or agency are examples of a program, service, or activity which must be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Since videotapes are usually developed with a voiced script, they are often not accessible when viewed by an audience which includes people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

EXAMPLE: The Department of Health develops a videotape for children on Hepatitis B transmission. The videotape is to be used as an educational tool in Hepatitis B prevention. This videotape must be accessible to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

EXAMPLE: The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism develops a videotape which assists business owners in the community to know how to start their own business. This videotape is loaned out to the public. This videotape must be accessible to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

EXAMPLE: The Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority develops a videotape which explains new research in developing alternate energy resources in Hawaii. This videotape is used for educational purposes, as well as to attract businesses to Hawaii. This videotape must be accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

When you develop a videotape, consideration should be given to using captions, as well as preparing a written transcript of the video to ensure maximum viewing by all audiences in the future. Captioning will be off-line captioning (since it is not live) and can either be open-captioned or closed-captioned. Remember that if you choose closed-captioning, your video's captions will not show up on most screens unless it has a special decoder and is set to show the captioning. Users may not have such equipment. Therefore, it is better to open-caption your videotape, which can then be used on any machine. An open-captioned videotape is also useful for a hearing audience in a noisy setting.

 Refer to **ATTACHMENT Q** for information on captioning services and resources.

You may choose to produce videos interpreted by a sign language interpreter, who translates the content while filmed in a "bubble inset" placed on the lower corner of the video screen. Although this does provide some access, captioning is a preferred means of access, since a smaller percentage of people who are deaf and hard of hearing have the ability to understand sign language compared to those who know how to read. In addition, the sign language interpreter in the "bubble inset" can often be quite small, making the interpreter difficult to view and understand.

When using or buying a videotape from another source as part of a program, service, or activity, always check to see if there is a captioned version available. As stated earlier, if given the choice, always choose an "open-captioned", rather than a "closed-captioned" version to avoid the need to find a television with a decoder when presenting the videotape. If no captioned version is available and a deaf or hard of hearing person is a part of the program, provide a sign language interpreter (see Chapter 3.3.1) or provide a written transcript of the videotape.

11.2 Public service announcements


When departments or agencies engage in public awareness and promotional efforts, public service announcements (PSAs) on the television or radio are often used.

EXAMPLE: The Department of Health develops a PSA to encourage teenagers to stop smoking. The PSA is to be aired on television stations as part of a month-long campaign to reduce lung cancer. The PSA must be developed to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

EXAMPLE: The Office of Elections develops a PSA to inform the public of their right to vote and how to register. The PSA is to be aired on radio stations prior to the elections to encourage voter turnout. The PSA must be developed to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Similar to the development of videotapes, if you are developing the PSA for television, consideration should be given to using captions as well as preparing a written transcript of the PSA. The captioning will be off-line (since it is not live) which can either be open-captioned or closed-captioned. Remember that if closed captioning is used, the captions will not show up on most television screens unless a special decoder is also present. Therefore, it is better to open-caption the PSAs, which can then be viewed on any television screen. An open-captioned PSA is also useful for a hearing audience for viewing in a noisy setting.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you receive federal funds to produce your video PSA, it must be captioned.

 Refer to **ATTACHMENT Q** for information on captioning services and resources.


You may choose to have your PSA interpreted with a sign language interpreter, who translates the content while filmed in a "bubble inset" placed on the lower corner of the screen. Although this does provide some access, captioning is a preferred means of access, since a smaller percentage of deaf and hard of hearing people have the ability to understand sign language compared to those who know how to read. In addition, the sign language interpreter in the "bubble inset" can often be quite small, making the interpreter difficult to view and understand.

If you develop your PSA for airing on the radio, neither captioning (in any form) or the use of a sign language interpreter will help a person who is deaf or hard of hearing. Thus, the only reasonable way you can make your PSA accessible is to have a written transcript or copy of the for-print PSA available, upon request.

11.3 Television programs

Television programs are produced by several State of Hawaii departments or agencies, particularly for educational purposes. These shows must be accessible to persons who cannot receive the information in the same format.

EXAMPLE: The Office of the Governor routinely holds a broadcast program for airing on television with the Governor's messages or speeches. This program must be made accessible to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

 Refer to **ATTACHMENT Q** for information on captioning services and resources.

Similar to the development of videotapes or PSAs, television programs must be made accessible to persons with communication limitations. Consideration should be given to using captions as well as preparing a written transcript of the program. The captioning will be off-line if the show is pre programmed, either as open-captioned or closed-captioned. Remember that if closed captioning is used, the captions will not show up in most television screens unless a special decoder is present. Therefore, it is better to open caption the program, which can then be viewed on any television screen.

When a program of the State of Hawaii is aired as a live television program, additional considerations need to be taken in order to provide access for persons with disabilities. Hawaii Public Television offers a live, call-in show with two-way interaction with the listening/viewing public. This program must be made accessible to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

A television show with audio will not be accessible to a person who is deaf or hard of hearing. Off-line captioning, whether open or closed, will not work for

live television, since off-line captioning requires advanced scripting and editing to add the captioning prior to airing. In this case, the program must consider either real-time (live) captioning or the use of a sign language interpreter in the studio. Both options will provide simultaneous translation for the live, possibly unscripted, dialog of the participants.

☞ *Refer to **ATTACHMENT M** for guidelines for utilizing sign language/English interpreters.*

Don't forget that if your live television show allows the home viewing audience to call in to ask questions, talk with the participants, donate money to a telethon, etc., you should provide a TTY on the phone line to allow a person who is deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired to call in. Your staff should be trained to be able to receive incoming calls.

☞ *Refer to **ATTACHMENT J** for information on telephone communication devices.*

Your responsibility as a state department or agency occurs when the state sponsors or hosts the program. If you are an invited guest speaker or participant on someone else's show, they are responsible for the access obligations.

11.4 Radio programs

Some departments or agencies of the State of Hawaii may develop a program or service on the radio as part of their outreach to the public.

EXAMPLE: The Office of the Governor sponsors a radio show in which the Governor fields questions about government services. The radio show is a program which must be accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

EXAMPLE: The Department of Health sponsors a program on the radio to educate children on sex education. The radio show is a program which must be accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.


If you develop your radio program, neither captioning (in any form) or the use of a sign language interpreter will help a person who is deaf or hard of hearing. Thus, the only reasonable way you can make your program accessible is to have a written transcript or a copy of the for-print PSA available, upon request.

Your responsibility as a state department or agency occurs when the state sponsors or hosts the program. If you are an invited guest speaker or participant on someone else's show, they are responsible for the access obligations.

CHECKLIST FOR ENSURING THAT AUDIO AND AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE

YES NO

___ ___ Videotapes and television public service announcements or shows have been captioned or interpreted with a sign language interpreter on the tape.

 *Refer to ATTACHMENT Q for information on captioning services and resources.*

___ ___ If "NO," a written transcript is available to accompany the videotape or television PSA.

___ ___ Radio PSAs or programs have an accompanying written transcript available.

___ ___ Live television shows with call-in options for the public have a TTY with trained staff on the phone line.